



COUNCIL MINUTES

June 10, 2010

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on June 10, 2010 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Kyle Jones
Dave Richins
Scott Somers

COUNCIL ABSENT

Dina Higgins
Dennis Kavanaugh

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

(Mayor Smith excused Councilmembers Higgins and Kavanaugh from the entire meeting.)

1. Hear a presentation and discuss the Central Main Street Area Plan.

Planning Director John Wesley, Economic Development Specialist Shea Joachim, and Jeff McVay, a consultant, addressed the Council relative to this agenda item.

Ms. Joachim displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**See Attachment 1**) and stated that the purpose of today's presentation is to update the Council regarding the Central Main Street Neighborhood Area Plan. He noted that the planning efforts, which coincide with the economic development Strategic Initiative established by the Council, would focus on how to redevelop older/vacant areas within the Plan boundaries; create tools to encourage new development; and stimulate additional economic opportunities for existing businesses in the area. Mr. Joachim added that the Central Main Street Plan is merely one element of an overall economic development strategy for downtown Mesa. (See Page 2 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Wesley reported that the purpose of drafting the Central Main Street Plan at this time, among other reasons, is to facilitate development along the extension of light rail into downtown Mesa and update the most recent Town Center Concept Plan. He also advised that the City of Mesa was awarded funding through the Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy and Environment Stimulus Grant, which would be used to create plans and zoning tools to facilitate more sustainable development.

Mr. Wesley further reviewed the Plan Area's boundaries and the characteristics of the area. (See Pages 3 and 4 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Wesley highlighted the Plan objectives as follows:

- Leverage public investment in light rail by facilitating redevelopment into mixed-use, higher intensity, transit-oriented development pattern.
- Enhance economic potential.
- Create an identifiable sense of place.
- Incorporate and improve sustainability practices.
- Facilitate transition from new development to existing neighborhoods.
- Identify capital improvements needed for redevelopment.
- Utilize stakeholders to help create and implement the Plan.

Mr. Wesley also spoke regarding the Plan timeline, including the Plan Advisory Committee's identification of goals and objectives; the drafting of the Plan framework; and preparing the draft Plan and final Plan review and approval. (See Page 5 of Attachment 1)

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the planning process began with the formation of a staff working committee comprised of members from Planning, Transportation, Economic Development and the City Manager's Office; that the Plan Advisory Committee, consisting of 25 to 30 citizens who represent property owners and businesses in the downtown area, as well as citizens who had an interest in the area, was formed; and that staff is utilizing social media and community input meetings to ensure that the public is aware of the process.

Mr. McVay indicated that the Plan Advisory Committee has met on six occasions and provided a brief overview of their efforts thus far. (See Page 6 of Attachment 1) He stated that in particular, the Committee reviewed background information regarding the Central Main Street Plan, evaluated assets, challenges and opportunities, and increased their understanding of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and station area design. Mr. McVay added that at last night's meeting, the Committeemembers engaged in "spirited discussion" concerning vision and what the Plan would accomplish in the future.

In response to a question from Mayor Smith, Mr. McVay explained that at last night's meeting, staff presented the Committee "a big picture idea" of the Plan, which would be further defined by sub-areas and separate visions, due to the great diversity in the Plan Study Area. He said that the spirited discussion occurred when the Committeemembers began to determine whether "the vision" would be the criteria the Plan follows as opposed to having a Plan with goals and objectives.

Mr. Wesley commented that part of the difficulty staff has encountered is the fact that a vision for downtown Mesa, for example, may not apply at Gilbert and Main simply because of the great diversity within the Plan Study Area.

Mayor Smith suggested that although the actual development along Main Street may be different from that on Broadway or Country Club, the vision is very similar, which is how to build upon the historic nature of what currently exists and transition to a more urbanized and transit-oriented type of existence. Mayor Smith added that individuals' ideas regarding how light rail would impact development/redevelopment in an area are much different now as compared to when light rail transit first opened.

Mr. Wesley clarified that perhaps staff would work on the key guiding principles (i.e., sense of place, sustainability factors) that would be common throughout the Study Area boundaries and then develop a more specific vision for the different areas.

Further discussion ensued relative to staff's outreach efforts via the Central Main Street Plan website and Facebook (See Page 7 of Attachment 1) and two neighborhood meetings in partnership with the Light Rail Stakeholders Advisory Committee. (See Page 8 of Attachment 1)

Mr. McVay reported that through the Plan Advisory Committee and neighborhood meetings, a series of assets, challenges and opportunities were identified. (See Pages 8 and 9 of Attachment 1) He advised that these items would be "the building blocks" as the Plan's goals and objectives are developed.

Responding to a question from Mayor Smith, Mr. McVay clarified that the Mormon Temple and Pioneer Park area were identified by the Plan Advisory Committee as assets. He added that a representative of the Temple is a member of the Committee.

Mr. McVay reiterated that the extension of light rail is a great opportunity for the Central Main Street Area and assured the Council that staff would focus on those efforts.

Mr. McVay further remarked that the Plan Advisory Committee divided the Study Area into five distinct Community Character Areas. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1) He explained that as the goals and objectives of the Plan are developed, those areas would be "re-imagined." Mr. McVay stated that certain areas may have the goal of maintaining and improving on their existing character, while others might transition to a new character or full scale redevelopment. He added that sub-areas would be identified, separate visions created, and specific goals and objectives established in order to achieve those visions.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that at the same time staff develops the Central Main Street Plan, staff would also develop a form-based code; that the form-based code would be the primary implementation tool of the Central Main Street Plan and the West Main Street Area Plan, which has already been adopted; that the City contracted with Opticos Design to develop the form-based code; and that on June 23rd and 24th, the consultants would conduct a form-based zoning charrette/workshop to seek input regarding the document.

Mr. McVay concluded his presentation by providing a brief overview of the upcoming steps in the process. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Mayor Smith stated that he was anxious to see the process move forward. He thanked the members of the Plan Advisory Committee for their efforts and acknowledged the citizens who have attended the public meetings and expressed interest in the Central Main Street Area Plan.

Mayor Smith expressed appreciation to staff for the presentation.

2. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on Post Employment Health Plan Program for eligible employees.

Mayor Smith stated that this item was continued to a future Study Session.

3. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Councilmember Richins: Attended an event at Carson Pool where Southwest Ambulance donated \$10,000 for the City's Youth Water Safety Program

4. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, June 10, 2010, 6:30 p.m. – District 5 Workshop on Zoning Ordinance Update

Monday, June 14, 2010, 6:30 p.m. – District 2 Workshop on Zoning Ordinance Update

Thursday, June 17, 2010, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, June 21, 2010, TBA – Study Session

Monday, June 21, 2010, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

5. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 7:59 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 10th day of June, 2010. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK